

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A lifting frame assembly for a hoist having a first end adapted to be attached to athe hoist, the frame assembly including a guide raisable and lowerable with the frame assembly by the hoist when a load is to be lifted, a lift slide slidably mounted on said guide for movement along a central guide axis, a biasing member connected between the frame member and the lift slide resiliently loading the lift slide to move along the guide in a direction toward the first end of the frame assembly to a retracted position, a stop to limit the lift slide from moving relative to the guide in a direction away from its retracted position under gravity acting on a load carried by the lift slide when the frame assembly and the guide are lifted by the hoist.

2. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 1, wherein the frame assembly includes a yoke pivotally mounted to the hoist about a horizontal pivot.

3. (Currently Amended) The lifting frame of claim 1, wherein said guide comprises a tubular sleeve liftable and lowerable with the frame assembly, and the lift slide comprises a tube that is slidable in the tubular sleeve.

4. (Currently Amended) The lifting frame of claim 2~~3~~, wherein said biasing member is attached between the yoke~~frame~~ and the lift slide in a ,~~and is positioned to fit~~ within the tube comprising the lift slide.

5. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 4, wherein the biasing member is an extension spring.

6. (Currently Amended) The lifting frame of claim 1, wherein said lift slide comprises a load support frame havingincludes a load support surface having a shape complimentary to a surface of a load to be lifted to receive and support the load when the load is oriented in a selected position for lifting.

7. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 6, wherein the load support frame has a generally horizontal leg having the load support surface for receiving the load, the load support surface supporting the load centered on the central guide axis of the guide.

8. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 7, wherein the generally horizontal leg comprises a first leg, a side bar connected to one end of the first leg, a second leg secured to the side bar and overlying the first leg and being spaced from the first leg sufficiently so the load is supportable between the first and second legs, the second leg being secured to the lift slide on a side of the guide opposite from the first end.

9. (Currently Amended) The lifting frame of claim 1, wherein said guide is a tubular sleeve, and the lift slide is a tube that slides inside the tubular sleeve, said biasing member being positioned on the inside of the tube that slides inside the tubular sleeve, and the biasing member having one end secured to the tube that slides inside the tubular sleeve and the other end secured to the ~~yoke~~frame assembly.

10. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 9, wherein the stop comprises a bearing head secured to the slide, and the bearing head stopping against an upper end of the guide.

11. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 7, wherein the load support surface of the generally horizontal leg is substantially straight, adapter members mounted on the load support frame comprising pivoting straps that are mounted on portions of the load support frame and that are adapted to rest on the load support surface to and provide a guide receptacle for holding the load substantially centered on the central guide axis of the guide.

12. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 11, wherein said pivoting straps are pivotally moveable to project above the load support surface and provide guides at opposite ends of said load support surface to match a configuration of a load to be lifted.

13. (Original) The lifting frame of claim 12, wherein said pivoting straps are moveable to a load retaining position projecting above the load support surface, and have inclined surfaces extending upwardly from the load support surface in opposite directions to form a load receiving pocket therebetween.

14. (Currently Amended) The lifting frame of claim 13, wherein the load support frame has an upright bar connected to the horizontal leg and wherein the pivoting straps comprise ~~there are a pair of the pivoting straps,~~ a first pivoting strap being pivoted to the upright bar, and a second pivoting strap being pivoted to the generally horizontal leg and, wherein the second pivoting strap pivots to a load retaining position in opposite direction of rotation from the direction of rotation of the first pivoting strap toward its loading retaining position.

15. (Currently Amended) A load support for a hoist assembly comprising a pivoting frame member that depends from a pivot connection to the hoist assembly, a guide member on the pivoting

frame member, a lift slide mounted on the guide member for slidable movement relative thereto, the lift slide being adapted to lift a load carried thereon when the frame member and guide member are lifted, a biasing member between the frame member and the lift slide that resiliently resists extension of the lift slide ~~under~~ from gravity on a load carried by the lift slide from a retracted position as the frame member and guide member are raised, and a stop between the guide member and the lift slide to limit the amount of extension of the lift slide relative to the guide member.

16. (Currently Amended) The load support of claim 15, wherein the lift slide extends through the guide member, and a load support frame at a lower end of said lift slide, said load support frame being adapted to support a beam.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~hoist assembly~~ load support of claim ~~15~~ 16, wherein said biasing member urges the ~~support member~~ lift slide in a direction to maintain contact of the load support ~~member frame~~ and a load to be lifted for a selected distance of extension of the lift slide.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~hoist assembly~~ load support of claim 15, wherein said guide member comprises a tubular sleeve, and the lift slide extends from the guide member as the lift slide it moves as the guide member is lifted to raise a load carried by the lift slide, the lift slide ~~being covered with~~ carrying indicia that is exposed in the lift slide retracted position and which moves past a reference mark on the guide member as the lift slide it extends from its retracted position.

19. (Original) The load support for a hoist assembly of claim 15, wherein said hoist assembly comprises a spreader bar that is

elongated and has opposite ends, a separate frame member pivotally mounted at opposite ends of the spreader bar, wherein each frame member includes a support member for supporting an elongated beam between the frame members at opposite ends of the spreader bar, said support members being generally C-shaped to permit mounting a beam to be lifted with a center thereof substantially along a center axis of the lift slide of both frame members.

20. (cancel) The load support of claim 19, wherein the pivoting frame members each comprise a yoke pivoted to the respective ends of the spreader bar, and a hoist for lifting and lowering the spreader bar in substantially the center portions of the spreader bar.

21. (New) In combination with a hoist assembly that raises and lowers a frame member that carries a load lifted against the force of gravity and wherein when lowering the frame member the load may be intentionally held from lowering, the frame member being connected to the hoist assembly, a guide member on the frame member, a lift slide mounted on the guide member for slidable movement relative to the guide member along a generally vertical axis, a load connection on a lower end of the lift slide for engaging and lifting a load, a biasing member between the frame member and the lift slide that resiliently resists extension of the lift slide from gravity acting on a load carried by the lift slide as the lift slide moves from a retracted position, and which permits the lift slide to move a limited amount away from and toward the retracted position when the lift slide is connected to a load, and a stop engageable between the guide member and the lift slide in a lift slide stopped position to limit the amount of extension of the lift slide relative to the guide member as the frame member is lifted by the hoist

assembly to provide a direct lifting connection between the hoist assembly and the lift slide through the frame member and the stop engaging guide member when the load being lifted causes the lift slide to extend to the stopped position.